

Walpole (R.) Early Orford R.

A
CHARACTER
OF THE
LIFE and ADMINISTRATION
Of the late Right Honourable
The Earl of ORFORD.

*Dicique beatus
Ante obitum nemo, supremamq; funera debet.*



L O N D O N :
Printed for M. COOPER in Pater-noster Row,
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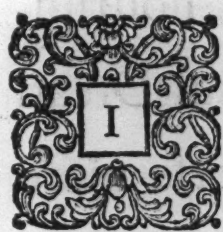
A
CHARACTER
OF THE
LIFE & ADMINISTRATION
OF
THE EARL OF GREY



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A
C H A R A C T E R
O F T H E
L I F E a n d A D M I N I S T R A T I O N
O f t h e l a t e R t H o n o u r a b l e t h e
E a r l o f O R F O R D .



Think it is universally
allow'd, that nothing
can add a greater
Weight to any Affliction inci-
dental to Humanity, than to

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reflect, that one has formerly been in a Situation, which seem'd to promise an absolute Impossibility of being ever subject to such an Evil. The Recollection of any past Enjoyment is always an Aggravation of the Pain we endure at present. And as the constant Vicissitude of human Affairs leaves the most flourishing Fortune in perpetual Dread of its Reverse, a Reverse more dreadful from the more promising Aspect of its present Appearance!

it

it is impossible to pronounce any Man compleatly happy (however he may now be distinguish'd by Success and Honour) before the Conclusion of his Life, the final Period of his Existence here.

An unlucky Cloud may overcast the very Eve of Age! Some fatal Catastrophe may overtake a Man in his last Scene of Life! We need not raise up the *Pompeys* and the *Cæsars* from the Dead, nor disturb the Ashes of
Men

Men less ancient, but as well known as they, to evince this Truth. The experienced Author of that instructive Satire, from whence I took the Sentence which stands in the Title of this Paper, has supply'd us with some memorable Instances which preceded his Time. We ourselves can remember many, and recollect more, which come nearer to our own Days. I shall name, and only name, a *Belizarius* and a *Bacon* ; I may add a *Raleigh* and

and a *Buckingham*: Characters indeed extremely different, but all conspiring to confirm the Truth of that Assertion.

If that unfortunate Prince, whose protracted Troubles and unprecedented Death fill up the blackest Page in *English* Story, had ended his Reign before the Opening of that melancholy Scene, succeeding Generations might have called him blessed.

And if the Life of a Princess, who inherited from him (let the
Reflection

Reflection fall on any Head but hers; whose Sovereignty and whose Sex should secure her from Insult) had not been prolong'd beyond her Wars, she had left behind her an unblemish'd Name; and the brightest Reign, for the Term of its Duration, that had ever been recorded in *British* Annals.

In short, one need but cast a cursory Eye over the public and private Revolutions of the World, to see the rapid Mutability

bility of Fortune ; how it is perpetually shifting the Scene in every Circumstance and Degree of Life.

To see, the entire Enjoyment of Health overcome by Sicknefs and Infirmary ; the most exalted Understanding clouded with Distraction, or lost in Dotage ; Persons who have been sitting in the full Blaze of Honour, in an instant cover'd with indelible Ignominy ; some pleading their Cause as Criminals, before that

B

very

very Bench where they once sat
 as Judges ; Conquerors cast
 down into Captivity, and Princes
 hurl'd headlong from their
 Thrones into Prisons, or into
 Exile !

In all these Cases, the Mi-
 fery that is suffer'd is made less
 tolerable, by an unavoidable
 Comparifon with the more plea-
 fing Circumftances which pre-
 ceded it ; fo that a Man can
 never be denominated truly hap-
 py till he has perfever'd in one
 constant

constant Tenor of Action and Success through the Whole of Life : But few are the Characters that are chequer'd with no Shade ! Few are the Lives that have preserv'd one Colour from their Commencement to their Conclusion.

That Great Person who has now wound up his last Thread of Life, who hast just finish'd his Course, and compleated his Race of Glory, was one of those happy Few, whose setting Rays

were, at least, as glorious as those of his first Appearance.

That favourite Son of Nature and of Fortune! endow'd with every internal Disposition, and bless'd with every outward Circumstance, which were capable of promoting his own Happiness, or the common Good.

It is beyond the Design of these short Reflections (which were not intended as a Monument to his Honour, but as a pleasing Speculation to myself)
to

to enter upon an accurate Discussion of any Part of that glorious Life!

His public Transactions will hereafter be recorded with Astonishment, and read with Rapture. And those who have had the Happiness of a nearer View into his Retirement, will recollect, with a melancholy Pleasure, the easy Entertainment of his most private Hours.

I shall confine myself to that one general Observation which
first

first led me into this Train of
 Thought : That taking in the
 Whole of his Existence here at
 one View, and considering this
 Point of Time as the Termina-
 tion of it, he seems to have been
 as compleatly bless'd as Huma-
 nity is capable of being on Earth :
 That whatever Loss the Public,
 or his own private Friends may
 sustain by the Death of one so
 valuable to both, yet every Man
 who truly lov'd him may con-
 sole himself with this Considera-
 tion,

tion, That how unfortunate soever his Death may be to others, it must be allowed to have been most glorious to himself; glorious to an uncommon Degree, to see such a Life preserve its Tenor to the End: No Variation of Principle; no Diminution of Honour; not the least observable Inequality of Temper.

His Life was of a Piece! a Consistency and Uniformity of Conduct and Success ran from
one

one End of it to the other, as if Heaven had intended him for a Pattern of successful Resolution to a most fluctuating and irresolute Age.

His great political Principle was Love of Liberty. His first Struggle was for Liberty, and he struggled with Success. Nor did his Patriotism sink in his Place, the common Burying-Place of modern Patriots. He continued to maintain those very Principles in the Service of two

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succeſ-

successive Kings, which he had begun to defend in Opposition to two designing Statesmen, to the eternal Honour of his Royal Master's Reign, and of his faithful Ministry: It must be owned, that the People of *England* have at no Time enjoyed a fuller Scope of every Liberty, even to the Border of its bad Extreme.

His Success too was as invincible as his Principles. He stood for twenty Years together

ther (an Instance unparallel'd
in any History) the most formidable
Opposition that was
ever known. In successive repeated
Skirmishes and Engagements, he triumph'd
without Insolence, and was at last defeated
without Dejection. That which was
consider'd as his Overthrow, was, in Fact,
the universal Establishment of his
Fame, and the entire Confusion
of his personal Antagonists. I
will not rake up a dying Fire,
nor

nor think of heightening that Character by Comparifon, which needs no Foil to fhew it to Advantage. The Result of a Committee appointed to inspect his Conduct, the constant Attachment to his Person after his Retreats from publick Bufinefs, and the Refpect which has been paid, even to his Death-bed, are fuch amazing Inftances of continued Honour as no paff Age has feen, and as the future will fcarce believe.

To crown all, that *Æquanimity*, that undisturbed Composure of Mind, which eased every publick Care, and sweeten'd every private Joy, was in him uninterrupted to the last. It was the best Medicine in his Sickness, the powerful Cordial that supported him under the Decay of Nature: from hence he drew fresh Resources of Comfort in those trying Hours, when every external Assistance fails. When he saw Death before him,

he

he seem'd to meet it, as he was
 used to meet those who threaten'd
 to pursue him to it, with
 an artless Smile. That Serenity,
 that Intrepidity of Soul (which is
 the Effect and Ornament of
 Integrity) was the Conclusion of
 his present Happiness, and a plea-
 sing Prelude to Futurity.

What more can be wish'd for
 by Man, or bestow'd by Hea-
 ven? What can those who suc-
 ceed him in his Honours, or e-
 mulate his Conduct, wish more
 for

for themselves, than that they
 may die the Death of this great,
 this happy Man, and that Their
 latter End may be like His?

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